

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-138 (canceled)

139. (currently amended): ~~An apparatus for removing a stopper from the pouring spout within the neck of a bottle~~ A removable sealing apparatus for a bottle, comprising:

a sleeve having internal threads configured for engaging threads exterior the neck of a bottle;

a cap portion joined to the top of said sleeve; and

means for sealing a bottle joined to said cap portion.

140. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said sleeve has a length that exceeds its diameter.

141. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said sleeve has a length approximately equivalent to one and one half to four times its diameter.

142. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said means for sealing comprises a cork.

143. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said means for sealing comprises a synthetic cork.

144. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said means for sealing comprises a molded polymeric plug.

145. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 144, further comprising sealing ridges surrounding said molded polymeric plug.

146. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said means for sealing comprises a substantially planar seal configured for engagement and sealing against a rim portion of the bottle.

147. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 146, wherein said planar seal comprises a compliant material.

148. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said planar seal comprises a flexible extending ring.

149. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said cap and said sleeve are joined by a separable connection configured to separate in response to unthreading of said cap from the bottle.

150. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 149, wherein said sleeve has internal threads configured for being threaded up to cover the bottle threads after separation of said cap.

151. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 150, wherein said sleeve is configured to separate from said cap and create a sharp drip resistant edge on the upper edge of said sleeve.

152. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 149, further comprising:

projections extending from the interior of said sleeve configured for engaging a recessed ring about the bottle neck to deform the top portion of said sleeve in response to unthreading of said cap; and

a mechanical connection between the lower portion of said cap and the upper portion of said sleeve which is configured to disengage in response to the deformation of the top portion of said sleeve.

153. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 152, wherein said projections are configured to engage a recessed ring which comprises a choke ring disposed beneath the exterior bottle threads.

154. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 149, wherein said cap portion and said sleeve are bonded together and break away from one another in response to sufficient applied torque upon said cap.

155. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 154, wherein said cap and said sleeve are molded as a single unit configured with reduced material about at least one annular portion of said sleeve configured for separating a portion of said sleeve in response to said applied torque upon said cap.

156. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 154:
wherein the interior of said sleeve is configured with ratchets for engaging the exterior of the bottle;

wherein a first level of torque is required to rotate said sleeve in a first rotational direction, said first rotational direction being that for which said cap is threaded down upon the top of the bottle; and

wherein rotation of said sleeve is substantially constrained by being subject to a required torque in excess of said first level of torque, when rotated in a second rotational direction, being that for which said cap is unthreaded from said bottle.

157. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 149:
wherein a lower portion of said sleeve is configured for retention on the exterior of the bottle; and

wherein said sleeve is configured with a connection between said lower portion of said sleeve and the remaining upper portion of said sleeve which is configured to separate in response to unthreading of said cap upon the bottle.

158. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 157, wherein said lower portion of said sleeve is sonically welded to said upper portion of sleeve.

159. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 157, wherein said lower portion of said sleeve is configured to engage protrusions on the exterior of the bottle to limit movement.

160. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 159, wherein said protrusions form a protruding ring.

161. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 149, wherein said sleeve has a lower portion configured to engage recesses on the exterior of the bottle to limit movement.

162. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 161, wherein said recesses form a circumferential slot about the neck of the bottle.

163. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, further comprising:

a reseal cap removably joined to said sleeve; and
a bottle sealing member joined to the underside of said reseal cap.

164. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 163, further comprising an engagement recess portion on a top portion of said sleeve for removably retaining said reseal cap.

165. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 164:
wherein said cap portion is integrated with said sleeve so that said cap and sleeve are removed as a single element from the bottle; and
wherein a bottle sealing member is joined to an upper portion of the integrated sleeve cap.

166. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139:
wherein said cap portion of said sleeve has an open top;
wherein said sealing member comprises a sealing disk for sealing the lip of the bottle; and
wherein said sealing disk may be separated from said cap portion of said sleeve.

167. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 166, further comprising a sealing plug extending from said sealing disk for sealing the interior of the neck of the bottle.

168. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, wherein said sleeve has a lower edge shaped for being disposed within a recessed portion of the bottle neck.

169. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 139, further comprising a bottle having external threads upon which said sleeve can be threadably engaged over the neck of said bottle.

170. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 169:
further comprising a recessed portion about the circumference of said bottle;
said recessed portion configured for receiving a lower portion of said sleeve.

171. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 170, wherein said sleeve is shaped to provide a substantially smooth transition with the neck of said bottle when said sleeve is threaded down upon the neck of said bottle.

172. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 169, wherein said bottle has a shape selected from the group of traditional wine bottle shapes consisting essentially of Bordeaux, Rubato, and Burgundy bottle patterns.

173. (previously presented): An apparatus for removing a stopper from the pouring spout within the neck of a bottle, comprising:
a sleeve having internal threads configured for engaging threads exterior the neck of a bottle;
a cap portion joined to the top of said sleeve; and
a plug joined to said cap portion and configured for insertion within the bottle neck for sealing the bottle.

174. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said sleeve has a length that exceeds its diameter.

175. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said sleeve has a length approximately equivalent to one and one half to four times its diameter.

176. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said plug comprises a polymeric material.

177. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 176, further comprising sealing ridges on the exterior of said plug.

178. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said sleeve, cap, and plug are molded as a single piece.

179. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said plug comprises a cork or synthetic cork material attached to said cap.

180. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, further comprising protrusions for retaining said cork or synthetic cork pressed into the interior of said cap.

181. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said cork or synthetic cork is bonded to the interior of said cap.

182. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said cap and said sleeve are molded upon said cork or synthetic cork.

183. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein the combination of said plug joined to said cap is attached to said sleeve.

184. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 183, wherein said plug is bonded to said cap.

185. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 183, wherein said cap is molded to said plug.

186. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173:
wherein a portion of said sleeve is configured to engage the bottle to prevent removal of that portion of said sleeve from the bottle; and
wherein a portion of said sleeve is configured to separate in response to sufficient rotation of said cap and said sleeve to break the seal between said plug and the bottle.

187. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 186, wherein said cap and an upper threaded portion of said sleeve are configured to separate from the remainder of said sleeve.

188. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 186, wherein a lower portion of said sleeve is configured to separate from the remainder of the sleeve.

189. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 173, wherein said cap includes an aperture configured for engaging and retaining said plug over the opening of the bottle.

190. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 189, wherein said plug comprises:

a seal flange having a substantially planar bottom edge with a diameter larger than that of the bottle rim opening; and

a protruding member extending from said seal flange of a diameter substantially equivalent to the diameter of the bottle neck opening;

wherein said plug is retained in contact with the rim of the bottle by said sleeve.

191. (currently amended): ~~An apparatus for removing a stopper from the pouring spout within the neck of a bottle~~ A removable closure apparatus for a bottle,
comprising:

a sleeve having internal threads configured for engaging threads exterior the neck of a bottle;

a cap portion joined to an upper portion of said sleeve; and

a substantially planar seal configured to sealably engage an exterior rim of the bottle and to disengage from the exterior rim of the bottle in response to the unscrewing of said sleeve from the neck of the bottle.

192. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 191, wherein said sleeve has a length that exceeds its diameter.

193. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 191, wherein said sleeve has a length approximately equivalent to one and one half to four times its diameter.

194. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 191:

wherein a portion of said sleeve is configured to engage the exterior of the bottle to prevent removal from the bottle while unscrewing the remainder of said sleeve from said bottle; and

wherein a portion of said sleeve is configured to separate from the remainder of said sleeve in response to a sufficient rotation of said cap and said sleeve for breaking the seal between said plug and the bottle.

195. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 194, wherein said cap portion with the upper threaded portion of said sleeve is configured to separate.

196. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 194, wherein a lower portion of said sleeve is configured to separate from the remainder of the sleeve.

197. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 191, further comprising:

a reseal cap configured for sealing said bottle after removal of said cap and said sleeve;

wherein said sleeve is configured for removably retaining said reseal cap prior to use in resealing the bottle.

198. (previously presented): An apparatus for removing a stopper from the pouring spout within the neck of a bottle, comprising:

a sleeve having internal threads configured for engaging threads exterior the neck of a bottle;

wherein the length of said sleeve exceeds its diameter;

a cap portion joined to the top of said sleeve; and

a seal member joined to said cap portion and configured for sealing the bottle when said sleeve is threaded down over the neck of the bottle.

Claims 199-220 (canceled)